

Press Release

HARFORD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Department of Community Services



PUBLIC SAFETY

"Ensuring a Safe
Harford"

EDUCATION

"Preparing Now,
Building for the Future"

EFFICIENCY IN GOVERNMENT

"Governing Smarter"

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

"Growing and Sustaining
Harford's Prosperity"

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

"Protecting Our
Environment"

QUALITY LIVING

"Safeguarding What is
Important to Harford
County Citizens"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 20, 2014

Media Contact: Sherrie Johnson (410) 638-3258 (office) 443-752-3210 (cell)

Annual Count Reveals 223 Homeless in Harford County

(Bel Air, MD) - - On Wednesday, January 29, 2014 Harford County local homeless service providers, community volunteers, local police agencies, and Harford County Government joined together in a coordinated effort to conduct a one-day count of homeless people in Harford County.

During the annual Point-in-Time Homeless Count, donated hats, gloves, coats, blankets, personal care items, food, and bus vouchers were distributed to the homeless encountered, and the remaining donations were shared with community shelter providers, Anna's House, Alliance, Inc., Harford Family House, and Homecoming Project, Inc. The Harford County Department of Community Services along with many volunteers conducted the count, along with law enforcement escorts from the Harford County Sheriff's Office, the Havre de Grace Police Department, the Aberdeen Police Department, and the Bel Air Police Department.

Results from the Point-in-Time Homeless Count demonstrate a total of 223 homeless persons in Harford County. A breakdown of the numbers being served reveals that 106 adults and 87 children were sheltered and receiving comprehensive support services on the night of the count. 24 single adults were temporarily placed in motels through DSS and the Office on Mental Health due to an expanded Freezing Weather Policy, triggered by extreme weather conditions. Street Outreach Teams found six single adults living outside.

This countywide canvass allows Harford County to secure the federal, state, and local funding necessary to serve this most vulnerable population and may assist in gaining expansion grants. The data collected during the annual homeless count also allows the community to strategically plan for the future needs of citizens.

Each year, the Harford County Department of Community Services works with community and faith-based agencies to help families avoid homelessness. The department works with partners to ensure that funding can be accessed at various locations throughout the County when tough times happen to families. Homeless individuals and families are able to develop life skills and employment opportunities, and achieve self-sufficiency by obtaining safe, affordable housing with partnerships. The Department also helps divert individuals with mental health issues away from the criminal justice system and into treatment, which reduces recidivism and increases stability.

(more)

Harford County currently has 13 emergency, transitional and permanent supportive shelters, offering a total of 228 beds for homeless adults, children, and families. In fiscal year 2013, Harford County provided 90 families, including 597 people, with 37,852 emergency shelter or transitional housing bed nights, for an average stay of 63 nights per person. In 2013, the Harford County Department of Community Services provided more than a \$1 million in homeless program funding, which assisted such organizations as Alliance, Inc., Faith Communities and Civic Agencies United, Inc. (FCCAUI), Associated Catholic Charities Inc./Anna's House, the Sexual Assault/Spouse Abuse Resource Center (SARC), Homecoming Project, Inc., and Harford Family House, Inc.

To learn more about homeless services in Harford County, visit <http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/services/downloads.cfm?FormID=2342>, or call the Department of Community Services at 410-638-3389.

#

"Preserving Harford's past. Promoting Harford's future."